

AT GAINES' MILL

ST NINETEEN YEARS AGO TO-DAY.

Northern Battle—Disposition of the Troops—Im-  
 Numbers on Both Sides—The Repulse of the  
 Enemy—Berdan's Sharpshooters—  
 The Frightful Slaughter.

When the order to fall back behind the Mes Mill stream was received by General Porter, efforts to dispose of all impediments to his movements by sending the trains, material, stores and the bulk of the heavy guns earlier, were made. The evacuation of the army from the vicinity of Galesville and Hogan's plantations, these being no longer of use in their then condition, owing to changes in the Union front, was completed by the 10th of May, 1862. In Connecticut heavy artillery, having them in charge, Meantime General Barnard, of the engineers, whom McClellan had left for that purpose, he returned to his headquarters from before the fall of Fort Fisher, and was sent by him to Galesville and pointed out, in a large way, positions for a portion of the troops, principally upon the left, near the

battalion with axes to fell trees for breast-works and to obstruct the advance of the enemy, claiming that, except those with the batteries, there were few axes in the corps. General Barnard quite early, agreeing to send the needed axe, and also to remind McClellan of his promise to Porter of the night before that he would

SLOCUM'S DIVISION

Franklin's corps to his support. On his way to the front, however, he met some of Slocum's troops on their way to the north bank, and supposing Meade had complied with his promise to strengthen Porter, and finding the former asleep, approaching his tent, went to bed without discharging his duty to the army.

remanded someone, so that instead of hitching the field in the morning, as had been contemplated, he did not arrive until after three o'clock. He was then informed that the urgent call from the commander of the Fifth Corps. Nor did the axes reach Porter, through the misunderstanding, until nearly sundown. The Pennsylvania Reserves were detailed to relieve Porter, hoping he might be able during the night to render his position impregnable to any surprise attack. The morning after the evacuation of Burnside's departure Porter began withdrawing from Beaver Dam Creek, and before ten o'clock the corps had occupied the ground previously held by the First Corps. The march was made. Like that at Mechanicsville, the new formation was formed on the east side of a small water-course (Chick Mill Creek), flowing a few miles from the Potomac. The Fifth Corps was ordered the Chickahominy from the north at a right angle. The troops constituting the line, for about half the distance, beginning on the morning of the 28th, were ordered to march quite heavily armed, through which the stream ran. The woods, however, were but a narrow

upon the west barely crossing the creek at its last place, beyond which the ground rose to quite precipitously to a height ranging from ten to fifteen feet. The country beyond was a level prairie, the distance being, perhaps better gone bare, than the bordering

EXCELLENT RANGE FOR PUNTS

and muckery against the fan. Toward the left of the ravine spread out flat-shaped, and the first ground of its banks descended gradually into the open, narrow valley of the Chickabombay. Upon both sides of the river, Morell's division of the Fifth Corps held the left, occupying the top of woods as already indicated, its left flank being toward the river. The right flank extended in a northerly direction into the elevated and open country on the north. General Butterfield's brigade, composed of the First, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Forty-fourth New York, and Sixteenth Michigan's Michigan Regiments, occupied the extreme left; then came the First Brigade, made up of the Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Twenty-fifth New York, Second Maine, and

of the Sixty-second Pennsylvania, Ninth Michigan, Ninth Massachusetts, and the fourteenth New York Volunteers, joining the First Division of regulars, and the Fifth New York (Duryea's) Zouaves under Warren, were partly in wooded, partly in cleared ground, extended to the rear of Coal Harbor. The position described about the arc of a circle, was two miles in extent, facing west and north, following within the curve and thus covering the edge heads to the rear in the valley of the Chickadee. McCall's division of Pennsylvania Reserves, having been engaged the day previous, were formed in a second line in rear of the first brigade on the left, in the low ground, PENNSYLVANIA IN THE FRONT.

atch Station to Sumner's Bridge, further down the river, and Seymour's brigade in reserve a second line yet further to the rear. General St. George Cooke, commanding five companies the Fifth and two squadrons of the First Regular Cavalry and three squadrons of the Sixth Pennsylvania (Kish's) lancers, selected his own station and posted his command behind a hill in front of the river, where the heaviest fighting occurred. The artillery of the corps, consisting of Linn's and Weed's batteries (D and I, Fifth United States); Weiden's C, First Rhode Island; Martin's D and Allen's C and E, First Massachusetts; Easton's A, B, and C, and Keim's A, B, and C, First Penn-

the commanding ground and at intervals between the hills and the base of the mountain.

and United States), from the artillery reserve, re-stationed, the former on the extreme right, Sykes and the latter on the extreme left of the line in the Valley of the Chickahominy. Before noon every thing was in readiness, so far as human foresight and military skill could determine, for the onset. About noon there was a stir in front of Sykes.

A FEW SCATTERING SHOTS

were heard, and then, without any preliminary firing on the way, the conflict was begun by the enemy marching down the Cent. Harbor road from the west. For half an hour the roar of cannon and rattle of musketry was terrific. Neither side

The wavelike sound moved westward; the rebels were being driven back. Five, fifteen minutes—the time dragged slowly—and the enemy upon the right had been pushed; then, like the low murmurings of the sea, he heard upon a still night near the coast, he came to the ears of those forming the Union.

rapidly approaching. Presently Sheridan and his sharpshooters (the First), from their stations in trees and from other elevated points began picking the leaders of the rebel column marching from one's house to the assault. While thus engaged a single shot was fired from the high ground to the westward, and at the signal the heavens began dropping the bolts of death upon the waiting lines below. The enemy were

SHELLING THE TIMBER.

Large branches, like giant arms twisted and torn by their sockets, tumbled down from above.

men fell from the lofty perch; and yet, save a few, they were not hurt. The right, and a few pieces farther to the left, the Union line were not touched. Suddenly, as though throttled by some mighty hand, the rebel batteries ceased. Behind their frail defenses, hastily constructed upon their arrival, they stood, realizing what was coming, crunched with leveled muskets. Boom! boom! boom! from the rear. Behind their heads shrieked the shells and hurtled the fearful tempest of grape and canister. Porter's men, masked in the timber, had watched and waited for the rebel batteries to open. When they had held their peace, long enough to know that the opportunity was ripe and they were having their say, they came forward, and the smoke from their muzzles settled below the treetops and hung like a canopy above the men. Then and sky seemed to meet at each discharge, the head of the rebel column appeared.

gleaming bayonets. First were seen through the vaporous  
age of smoke, slowly drifting upward, the  
gleaming bayonets  
waving banners, then the heads, shoulders,  
bodies of marching men dimly outlined  
the blue sky. The command to fire was  
and it was time, for the foe were within less  
fifty yards. The ready flames leaped from

At once the elderly's duties begin in earnest to patter upon the leafy screen over head with the frozen pellets of a tremendous hail-storm. Five minutes, and the tempest had passed away, the grassy incline in front was strewn with its ricks of mangled, bleeding forms. The herbage, patches, had taken on a ghastly, crimson tinge. Never lay upon the level ground above and could not be seen; but artillery, well aimed at point-blank range, is merciless. There, over down, the slaughter had been fatal.